

Background

Reading through the Bible is a great opportunity to get to know God's Word. Doing it together provides accountability and support. The important thing is that we begin where we are and keep going. This year I would like to offer an abbreviated, abridged approach in reading the Old Testament. A couple of things need to be kept in mind. Spiritual formation, transformation, and growth come from being in God's Word. The goal is not just to read it, but to allow its truth to penetrate our lives, to change us and mold us. That is what I mean by "Getting into God's Word, so His Word gets into us."

One, all of the Old Testament is God's Word. Every part is important, meaningful and significant. At the same time some of the parts are harder to connect with and therefore can be less interesting. My goal is to keep us going so we make it through. I have taken some liberty to help keep us focused. Yes, it is my opinion, but my goal to help us know the story of God's people and not get bogged down is a lot of detail. We will read through all of the New Testament.

Second, the goal is to read about two chapters a day, about 10-15 minutes. Keeping it short and getting it done is better than long passages and long time and not making it through.

Third, when we read it is good to look for principles God taught His people to live by, expectation, and times of success and failure. What does God want us to learn, understand, realize or apply to our lives are themes we should be looking for.

Fourth, my goal is to provide some brief commentary and context at the beginning of each book so we can keep the story in perspective.

Fifth, it is good to have a reading partner to keep us focused, accountable and perhaps to discuss parts we do not understand.

Enjoy your reading and time with God.

Dr. Ralph Gibson, Pastor

Daily Reading for February

This month we finish Exodus. Be sure to carefully read chapter 20. We also discover many other expectations that God gave to his people as ways to honor, worship and express devotion and commitment to him. Principles that followed the Hebrews for hundreds of years.

The general time frame for the Exodus is 1500 BC. The books of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy were written by Moses during this time period.

The book of Exodus is the story of the Hebrews release from slavery in Egypt. It contains many important stories and includes the first listing of the Ten Commandments. The books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy contain many other important parts of the story. While every part of these books is important, inspired scripture, and many parts do apply, there is much that does not. So I have given us a couple of highlights that everyone needs to know as we discover the story of the Hebrews as they move toward the Promised Land. We should be thankful that Jesus fulfilled all of these sacrificial requirements through his life and death. It also helps keep the story moving and interesting. You are certainly welcome to read the other parts.

Keep in mind that current day Jews still look back to this as the most important event in Hebrew history.

The general theme of each of them is faithfulness and obedience to God morally and spiritually. We see that God's holiness and man's sin are reflected in the sacrifices necessary in following God's Holy sacrificial law. It is important to remember that all of this is fulfilled in Christ's life and death.

As we read look for what is God trying to emphasize in this passage? In what ways does this apply to me? What principles do I need to take from this? What is God trying to say to me and my life?

